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PUNS.

FROM THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

"I was told some time ago of a pun being *whistled* at Cambridge. A member of that University was so addicted to punning, that a wager was laid him, that he could not refrain from it an hour in company. Before the time was expired, he happened to see a sailor in the street, who had lost a leg, swinging between two crutches ; and immediately began to whistle the tune of "*Through the wood laddie.*"

Billy Snip went to skate, when, the ice being loose,
 He fell in ; but was sav'd by good luck :
 Cried the Tailor, ' I'll never more leave my *hot goose*,
 To receive in return a *cold duck.*'

[The science of *Bibliography*, is perhaps of all others the least known in this country, although there a few amateurs who have a smattering of it. When books and libraries became multiplied, there was real utility, in it when properly conducted, and there are some works in this department that are invaluable. It has recently in England become a most expensive and fashionable pursuit, and much ridiculous extravagance is discovered, which in the mode in which it is now conducted, rather demands wealth than talent to become an adept. The principle author in this branch is the Rev. T. F. Dibdin, who has published some amusing works, that by their splendid decorations have tended greatly to nourish the *Bibliomania*. In the Gentleman's Magazine for June, there is a letter from him describing a work he has now in progress, and which may give an idea of the present state of this fashionable pursuit.]

Kensington, June 7.

' MR. URBAN,

On publishing the *fourth* and *last* volume of the BIBLIOTHECA SPENCERIANA, I consider myself in some degree called upon by the subscribers to my remaining works in hand, to state the progress they are making, and the probable period of their publication. The third volume of the TYPO-

GRAPHICAL ANTIQUITIES has been for some time in gradual progress through the press, and will appear towards the end of the present year. About one third of it is already printed. The BIBLIOGRAPHICAL DECAMERON demands a more explicit notice.

In the few copies of the Prospectus of this latter work, which I circulated among my friends, I observed that it was my intention to exhibit in it, ‘a union of elegant ornament and interesting information, upon subjects which were now beginning strongly to claim the attention of the publick; and upon which, in this country, very little accurate information had, comparatively, been imparted’—and that eighteen months had then elapsed in the preparation of drawings and ‘engravings for it.’ The parts or manner of the distribution of the work, are as follows.

First day.—*Illuminated Manuscripts.* Under this interesting department will be found embellishments, or faithfully executed fac similes, illustrative of a few of the choicer and more splendid mss. in the libraries of the *British Museum*, of the *Bodleian*, of *Lambeth*, of *Westminster*, and of a few distinguished private Collectors. I should be loth to promise what is not likely to be performed; or to incur the censure of vanity or presumption in asserting that the materials already collected, in this department of the work, are more numerous, more beautiful, and more faithful, than any which, to my knowledge, have come under the eye of the publick. Those friends who have seen the drawings already made from the magnificent Missal of Pope Sextus IV. executed by *Francesco Veronese* and *Giralomo dei Libri*—and formerly in the collection of Mr. Edwards—from the *Roman de la Rose* (in the British Museum)—from the exquisite small missal sold at the sale of the library of Mr. Edwards (No. 829. now in the collection of Mr. North)—and from the yet more celebrated volume, known under the name of the *Bedford Missal*,—from the MS. *Decameron* of *Boccaccio*, in the collection of Mr. Coke of *Holkham*—from fragments of *old choral books*, in the collection of Mr. W. Y. Ottley—from the MS. of the *Greek Gospels* in the collection of Mr. Dent—as well as from several other precious specimens of early art—are at liberty to declare their own unbiassed sentiments respecting the truth, or otherwise of the foregoing declaration.

Second day. *Printed Missals, Breviaries and Horæ.* Upwards of fifty wood cuts are already executed to give interest and beauty to this department of the work. From these will be seen the costume, and the prevailing taste (whether in droll or grave subjects—childrens' pastimes, or death's dances) of the times—the variety, the richness, and the typographical difficulties of the execution of these publications, as well as the comparative state of the arts of design and engraving. The devices of Verard, Pigouchet, Kerver, Hardouyn, Simon du Bois, &c. &c. &c. will also be found in this part of the work.

Third day. *Books printed from wooden blocks ; and books containing early and curious specimens of engraving ; Bibles ; Books of games and sports ; of manners and customs ; of studies and sciences.* These subjects bespeak attention for themselves. Numerous engravings in wood are already executed for their elucidation ; and among them will be found some interesting specimens illustrative of the studies of Botany, Astrology, Chiromancy, &c. &c. three centuries ago. *Books of Emblems* are also noticed and illustrated by fac similes.

Fourth day. *Origin and progress of printing upon the continent.* A concise and faithful outline of this interesting subject is yet a desideratum in bibliography. How far my past and present pursuits have fitted me for the task, the public is left to determine.

Fifth day. *Portraits, devices, and marks of ancient Printers.* It will be obvious that this department of the work must be almost entirely decorative. Accordingly, there have been already cut in wood, fac similes of the devices of Vostre, Petit, Rembolt, Regnault, Le Noir, Vostreman, Gilles de Gourmont, Marnef, Roche, Eustace, Galliot du Pre, Borcard, Tailluer, Consin, Couteau, Ascensius, Colinæus, Morel, the Stephenses, Ferendat, Chevelat, Amazeur, Vignon, Lambert, &c. &c.—among the French printers ;—of Aldus and his family, of Giolito, the Sessæ, the Giunta, the Sabii, the Scoti, &c. among the Venetian printers ;—of Froben, Oporinus Valentine Curio, Heveagius, Brylinger, Guarinus, Bebelius, Isingrinus, &c. —among the Basil printers ;—of Plantin and Tibbald, &c. —among the Antwerp printers ;—of the Gryphii, the Frel-læi or Frellonii, &c.—among the Lyons printers ;—and of

the Elzevirs and Hackizes, &c.—among the Dutch printers. Of many of these, several *varieties* of their devices will be given : and I am already disposed to exult in the wealth of my collection, which contains not fewer than *six dolphins* of Aldus, and *seven cats* of the Sessæ !

Of the *portraits of the printers*, those of *Froben and Plantin*, upon copper (the first from an original painting in the possession of Earl Spencer—and the second from a scarce print by Goltzius) cannot fail to be interesting to the lovers of fine printing, and learned printers.

Sixth day. *Of ancient and modern bookbinding and bookbinders*. Fac similes of covers of old books—displaying tasteful and beautiful specimens of ancient art, in the Arabesque character, have been carefully selected. Anecdotes of modern bookbinders, with criticisms on their comparative merits, will form no uninteresting addition to this department of the work.

Seventh day. *Literary bibliography*. The portraits of Mallinkrot, Mattaire, Meerman, Fabricius, Tiraboschi, and Lambecius, will appear in this division of the work.

Eighth day. *Of book sales by auction*. This department of the work will necessarily form a continuation of what appeared in the *Bibliomania*—from p. 404 to 612. Although I have been anticipated in a portion of it by the publication of Mr. Horne, yet it seems essential to make such a continuation—which will be found to contain some anecdotes not generally known. The Roxburgh, Stanley, Alchorne, Merley, Towneley, Edwards, Devonshire, and Grafton Book Sales, afford materials sufficiently varied for the selection of the Book Chronicler.

Ninth day. *Eminent English Booksellers and Printers*. The portraits of the late Mr. T. Payne, of Mr. George Nicol, bookseller to his Majesty, of the first Caslon the type-founder, of Baskerville, and of Messrs. Nichols, Bensley and Bulmer, will be introduced in this department of the work.

Tenth day. *Account of some of the most distinguished publick and private Libraries, in Great Britain*. The libraries of Durham, York and Lincoln Cathedrals, will be noticed in this department ; and a beautiful portrait of *Dean Honeywood*, the founder of the latter library—as well as the portraits of *James* and *Rouse*—the earliest

librarians of the Bodleian collection, will enrich this tenth and last division.

Such is the 'Prospectus' of the *Bibliographical Decameron*. It remains to make an observation of no small importance to the welfare of the work. Every candid and reflecting reader must allow, that, in the conduct of such a performance, consistently with the plan above laid down, which is intended to be rigidly carried into effect—it will demand no trifling support in the shape of *pecuniary resources*. Nearly *one thousand pounds* have been already devoted to the decorations alone: but to complete the plan, *another thousand* will be essentially requisite. For this I purpose making an appeal to the liberality of my subscribers; and as the work is published entirely at my own expense, to solicit for the first time, the contribution of one third of the subscription price.

Upon the maturest consideration, and making due allowance for a calculation which cannot embrace a few unforeseen contingencies, I do not imagine that these two volumes, printed in the best manner of the *Shakespeare Press*, in a small delicate type, upon paper of unusually fine substance, nearly the whole of which has been already manufactured for the work—enriched with scarcely less than *three hundred embellishments*, and comprehending at least 1000 pages, can be published at a price below that which the reader has probably before noticed; nor shall they exceed 7*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* to the subscriber.

The work will be dedicated, by permission, to his Grace the *Duke of Devonshire*; and I pledge myself *it shall never be re-printed*; as far as I have the power of carrying such pledge into effect.

Yours, &c.

T. F. DIBDIN.

TO THE EDITOR.

SIR,

You have given in your last number some extracts from a work printed at Breslau, entitled *Biographie Moderne*, which is at the Athenæum. In the twenty-seventh number of the *Edinburgh Review*, there is an article of considerable extent, said to have been written by Mr. Walsh, on a work with the same title, printed at Leipsic; it may be